

## Alley SG—December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022

**Today's Bible Story:** The Greatest Gift (Jesus Is Born) • *Luke 2:1-7*

**Today's Key Question:** What are you excited about giving?

**Today's Bottom Line:** Jesus is the greatest gift

**Monthly Memory Verse:** *Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you. He is the Messiah, the Lord.* Luke 2:11 (NIRV)

### 1. Bible Story Extension

**What You Need:** Bible, gift bows (50 total, 25 of 2 different colors per group)

#### What You Do:

- **Divide** the group into two teams.
- **Give** each team 25 gift bows.
- **Ask** kids to name the main people (and one angel) mentioned in today's story. (Mary, Joseph, Gabriel, Elizabeth)
- **Explain** that you will read a statement then teams must arrange gift bows to form the first letter in the name of the person from the story it applies to.
- **Choose** from the following statements or add others if desired.
  - I've gotta go check this out with my cousin. (*Mary*)
  - I can't wait to tell Mary that God has an amazing, one-of-a-kind plan for her life. (*Gabriel*)
  - I'm from Nazareth and King David is one of my ancient relatives. (*Joseph*)
  - You will have a son and His name will be Jesus. (*Gabriel*)
  - I nearly lost it when an angel appeared to me out of the blue. (*Mary*)
  - The Lord has blessed you in a special way. He is with you. (*Gabriel*)
  - I am going to have a baby and the baby is God's Son. (*Mary*)
  - Whoa! I felt my baby jump when you came it. (*Elizabeth*)
  - I trusted the angel when he said that God would be with me. (*Mary*)
  - I can't wait to marry the most amazing woman ever. (*Joseph*)
- **Use** discussion to help kids connect with the story.
  - In one word, what do you think Mary would have been thinking and feeling after the angel, Gabriel, left the room?
  - Gabriel gave Mary a lot to think about; One minute she's a 15-ish-year-old girl waiting to marry a guy named Joseph, and the next minute she's going to have a baby who will save the world. That's terrifying on a lot of levels. Name some fears Mary would need to trust God with.
  - Mary's situation was unique to say the least. Still, fear is fear, but we can have joy even when we're afraid of what's next. Why is that true?
- **Prepare** to read Luke 1:46-49 by explaining that it's part of the prayer of praise Mary spoke when she went to visit her cousin, Elizabeth. (If needed, remind kids that this is the same Elizabeth from last week's story. Zechariah and Elizabeth were the parents of John the Baptist.)
- **Encourage** kids to listen for words of joy reflected in Mary's prayer and her confidence that God was with her. Pause after each verse is read to let kids share.
  - Read Luke 1:46 then ask teams form the letter "J" with gift bows.
  - Read Luke 1:47 then form the letter "O" next to the "J."
  - Read Luke 1:48 then form the letter "Y" next to the "O."

- Read Luke 1:49 then form an “!” after the letter “Y.”
- **Close** by asking kids to list a few practical ways to find joy in situations where it doesn’t come easy.

## 2. Verse to Take with You

**What You Need:** Romans 15:13 Word Search (1 per student), pens

### What You Do:

- **Give** each of the kids a pen and a copy of “Romans 15:13 Word Search” Activity Page.
- **Direct** kids to read the directions on the page and then find and fill in the missing words of Romans 15:13.
- **Invite** someone to read the verse aloud when the puzzles are completed.
- **Explain** that the verse in the puzzle, Romans 15:13, comes near the end of a long letter that Paul, a follower of Jesus, wrote to encourage and teach the church in Rome.
- **Remind** kids that joy, like the words in the puzzle, is something we will find if we look for it in the right place.
  - Name some places people often look for joy.
  - Explain why you agree or disagree with the following statement: Joy can be found in situations that are difficult.
- **Read** Romans 15:13 again then ask kids to take turns finishing the following sentence: This verse reminds me that . . .”

## 3. Take a Snapshot

**What You Need:** Paper plates (1 per student), Markers

### What You Do:

- **Give** each of the kids a paper plate and a marker.
- **Instruct** kids to place the plates on top of their heads.
- **Tell** them to use the marker to write about or draw something they are afraid of but not to let others see what it is.
- When they’ve finished, **let** the kids take turns showing what they wrote or drew. Before they talk about their drawings, let others guess what they are.

### What You Say:

“Fear comes in all shapes and sizes. Your fears may be different from someone else’s, but everyone has something that freaks them out. It might be spiders, being up in front of an audience, wild storms, trying new things, or being alone . . . the list goes on and on. Whatever is on your ‘Freak Out List,’ God can help you face it. He’s not afraid of ANYTHING. God’s with you all the time, and if you’re a follower of Jesus, He sends His Spirit to be with you as well. He’s got your back. Not only your *back*, He’s all around you—front, sides, from the top of your head to the soles of your feet. Fear doesn’t have a chance when we turn it over to God and trust Him. He gives us peace and joy even in scary situations because we know He’s with us.”

#### **4. Discussion Questions**

- What are some things that you believe are true about God?
- How can those things that can help you when you're afraid?
- What are some reasons we feel afraid?
- Is fear ever a GOOD thing? When and why?
- (*Word Nerd Alert!*) What does *omnipresence* mean? (The ability to be everywhere at the same time.) God is omnipresent. Why is that a big deal?
- How does knowing that God is omnipresent give you joy?

#### **5. Close in Prayer for your Group**

- Close your Group in prayer by praying for safety and protection during the Holiday Season.